

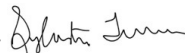


CITY OF HOUSTON

Mayor's Office

Interoffice Memorandum

To: All City Employees

From: Sylvester Turner, Mayor 

Date: February 23, 2022

Subject: Updated Guidelines on Face Covering (Mask) and Temperature Screening Requirement

Again, I want to thank each of you for your assistance for nearly two years in doing your part as we continue to manage the effects of COVID-19 on our community and workplace. With the benefit of widely-available vaccines and booster shots and robust COVID-19 testing, our country is beginning to move into a new phase of the pandemic. Due to our community's combined efforts, the positivity rate in Houston is declining and hospitalizations are manageable. Therefore, effective immediately, except for the employees noted below, I am suspending A.P. 3-39, Access to City Buildings or Facilities During a Medical Epidemic or Pandemic ("the Policy"), pursuant to section 4.1 of the Policy. With respect to the face covering requirement, the suspension does not apply to all clinical personnel (e.g. EMT's, paramedics, nurses and doctors) when interacting with patients. All clinical personnel who are able to medically tolerate a face covering must continue to adhere to the Policy as it relates to wearing a face covering when interacting with patients.

An employee is no longer required to conduct a temperature screening upon entering City premises or to wear a face covering except for clinical personnel interacting with patients. However, any person, whether fully vaccinated or not, **may choose** to wear a face covering. In addition, we strongly encourage people who are not fully vaccinated or are immunocompromised to wear a face covering while entering or upon City premises, but doing so is not required. Conversely, employees must wear a face covering and comply with other requirements when applicable and required pursuant to other non-City orders and policies when conducting City business, such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention orders relating to transportation hubs (i.e. airports), court orders governing the operation of municipal courts, or policies required to enter non-City of Houston facilities (e.g. hospital or medical facilities).

All employees are expected to report to work unless they are sick, ill, or test positive for COVID-19. Employees who are exposed to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19, suspect they may have COVID-19, or who contract COVID-19 must still notify their supervisor and Department's FMLA Coordinator to obtain further instructions about reporting to work or remaining on City premises. Any absence away from work shall be covered by the employee's available accrued leave balances (or other appropriate leave for eligible employees in accordance with applicable state law).

I encourage all employees to get a COVID-19 vaccination and booster shot when eligible. Please remember to self-report your COVID-19 vaccination in the City's Talent Management System Healthy Rewards Initiative [portal](#) to receive \$25 in Healthy Rewards and to satisfy one of the wellness engagement options to earn an insurance discount as part of the City's annual wellness program goals.

The COVID-19 pandemic is a fluid situation. In the event circumstances change and warrant further protections, I may reactivate the Policy. Lastly, E.O. 1-71, COVID-19 Mitigation Safety Measures, remains in effect and failure to comply will result in corrective action being administered. For updated information about local risk, as well as key messages, frequently asked questions, communication resources, rumor control, emergency preparedness tips and more, you may visit [HoustonEmergency.org](https://houstonemergency.org).